

(1) I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different than a slave --- though he is the owner of everything! But he is [put] under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.

(4) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, to redeem those under the Law, so that we might receive adoption as sons!

(6) And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So, you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

(8) Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. But now that you have come to know God --- or rather be known by God --- how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?! You observe days and months and seasons and years! I am afraid I may have labored over you in vain....

Think on these things:

- 1) According to Matthew 13:24-30, the Parable of the Tares & Wheat, it is hard to distinguish between the two kinds of plants. When can the two be differentiated?

- 2) Similarly, Paul says in vs.1-3 that God’s children are indistinguishable from others. How are we described before choosing salvation (v.3)? Because we are described this way, what does v.2 say we need (i.e., God’s Law)?

- 3) What did God do at the appropriate (fullness of) time (vs.4-5)? What was the outcome for us because of God’s action (v.5)?

- 4) What does the Son’s Spirit enable us to do?

- 5) Are you still a slave to sin? _____

6) Modern humanity really doesn't worship "idols" made of wood, stone or metal. However, we have all heard sermons that people still have idols, in the sense of stealing our energy and focus away from God. Can you name a few things that steal your time from God?

7) V.9 indicates that something has happened, prompting Paul to ask the question, "How can you turn back again" to these idols, weak and WORTHLESS elementary principles of the world? So, what do you think draws our hearts to turn back like this after we become Christians?

8) V.10 says, "You observe days and months and seasons and year!" V.11 is Paul's expression of concern that the people did not understand what freedom in Christ really means. These non-Jewish believers are being tricked by the Jewish believers to think proper standing before God comes from following their church observances. Can you name,

Jewish Observances in the calendar year? _____

Christian Observances in the calendar year? _____

9) What is the value in these observances? What is the stumbling block?

Value - _____

Stumbling block - _____

People and situations I want to pray for this week: